

Library Adversity, Global Diversity

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Abstract

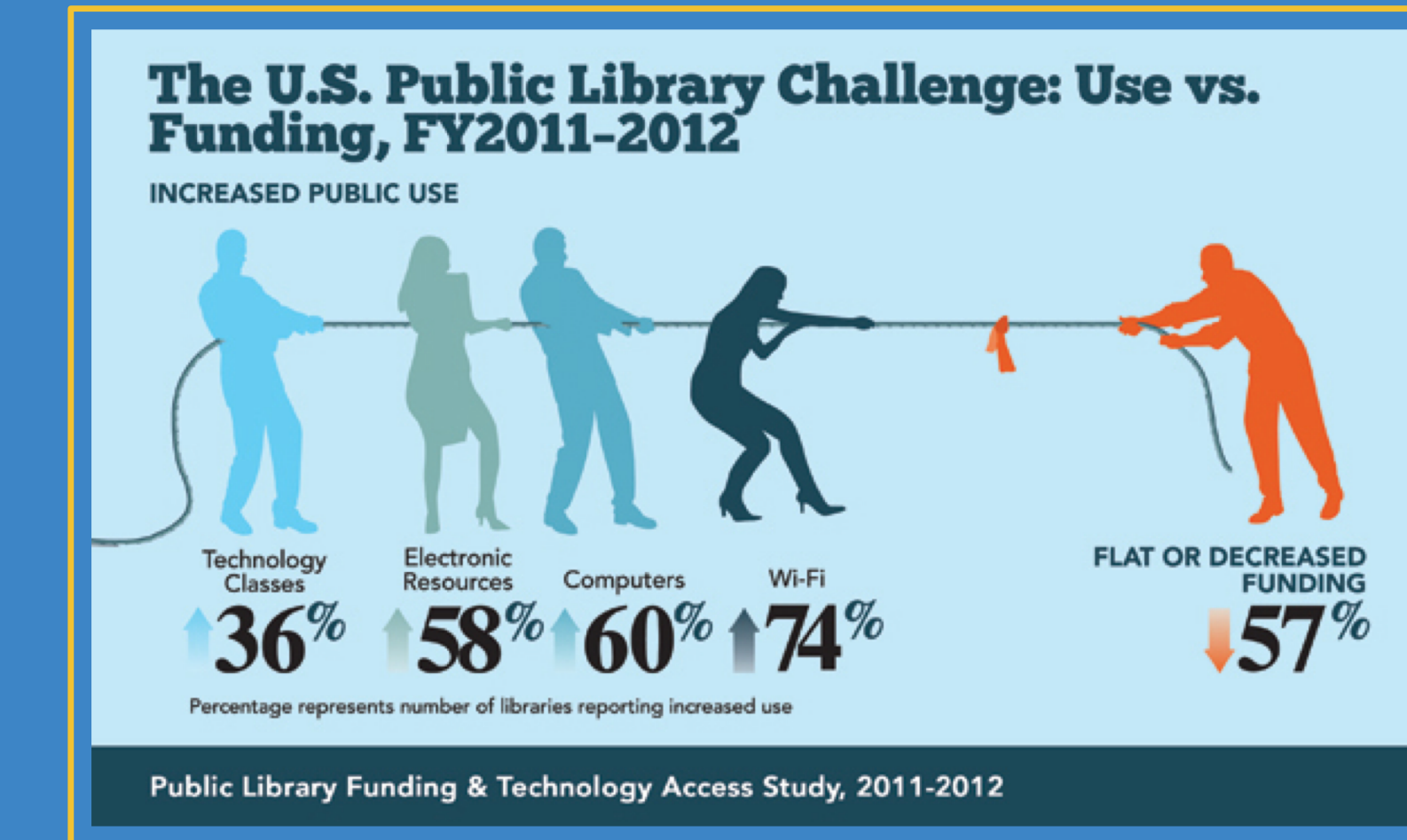
Libraries are a hub for education and creativity and are essential to a functioning society, but are often overlooked. Today, libraries are struggling to stay relevant as a result of new technologies and changing attitudes. To solve this problem, libraries must not only change with the times technology wise but keep in mind the most important aspect: the people that use them. In this project, we will look at what libraries around the world do well and use that to determine what our libraries could benefit from.

Introduction

Libraries are an important community resource; they promote literacy, provide access to technology and books, and create community. But because of many factors, including funding, leadership, and public opinion, libraries are declining in quality and relevance. To keep these amazing resources available, libraries need to be changed to fit modern times.

Trends That Impact Library Development

- Technology
 - E-books
 - Computer Labs
 - Internet
 - Self Checkout
- Consumerism
 - Coffee Shops
 - Bakeries
 - Shops
- Community Support
 - Amount of people who support libraries
 - New programs
 - Literacy rates



While usage and services are increasing, funds are decreasing



Dokki Library in Denmark

What do libraries in our country and across the globe have to offer?

The Martin Luther King Jr. Library in Washington, D.C. has a set of labs, such as the “dream lab,” where resources such as 3D printing, laser cutters, and digital production services are offered. The library also offers introduction and safety classes for all the equipment, allowing users over the age of 13 to access resources freely.

The Veria Central Public Library in Greece provides a unique solution to inequalities in access to information. It hosts a mobile library program which helps to bring books, computers, and internet access to surrounding areas.

Libraries like Dokki and Herning Public Library in Denmark combine technology and modern design with a community-driven space and very kid-friendly atmospheres. The creation of fun places for kids in the community both allows parents to go to the library with their kids and for the children to see libraries as exciting places, cultivating a new generation of library-goers.

Some libraries in Chicago have been combined with public housing, with apartments above the public libraries. One example is The Northtown Affordable Apartments and Public Library which has modern architecture to create an interesting look. These libraries have “morphed into indispensable and bustling neighborhood centers and cultural incubators.” (Kimmelman)

Limitations

- Funding
 - Libraries often receive less funding than needed to add new technologies
- Community Support
 - Libraries often don't receive enough community support to add new ideas into the library
- Political Support
 - Politicians often don't care much about libraries and are left behind on support and given less funding from the government



Herning Public Library in Denmark

Solutions

- Multiple technologies and classes for using them
 - 3D Printers
 - Laser Cutters
- Classes for various job fields
- Youth centered programs and atmosphere
- Community involvement for making decisions
 - Polls
 - Community wide Discussions



The Northtown Affordable Apartments and Public Library in Chicago

